

Present

Rob McDonough - Chairman
Dave Lewis – Vice Chairman
Mike Cobb - Member
Orville Johnson - Member
Joel Redding – Member

Susan Good Geise - BoCC
Eric Griffin – Public Works
Christian Lehnert – Weed Coordinator
Nicho Hash – Deputy Attorney

Call to Order: -Rob McDonough called the meeting to order.

Introductions: - Nicho Hash, Deputy County Attorney was introduced.

Minutes: Joe Redding moved to approve the December minutes as sent. Seconded by Orville Johnson and approved.

Budget Report/Claims: .Orville Johnson moved to approve the budget report as sent. Seconded by Joe Redding and approved.

Public Comment: - None

REPORTS:

BoCC – Susan Good Geise – Question: Whose responsibility is it to protect private individuals from flooding who are renting in a trailer court owned by private landowners in the county? Mike Cobb – Is it possible the Conservation District could be involved in helping with the flooded area? Question 2: – Would the County be a possible resource to provide information about available services for people who want to help when furloughed. Counties across the country are providing information where to go to get services. The County will not give out sand bags anymore to private individuals during flooding. There are signs of flooding around Silver Creek. The budget process is proceeding. Pure View Medical Center who are partners with the county, might be looking to split off They have grown, are robust and in good shape and might like to go off on their own. The County is looking at the benefits on both sides if they split off. BoCC is busy with subdivision Part 2 process and trying to prepare for floods.

Deputy County Attorney – Nicho Hash – Compliance enforcement process - There were changes to the compliance statutory process in 2013 involving a few more steps for the weed district board. The county is starting a process to determine what needs to be done in order to pursue non compliance in the court system. – A few more steps for the weed district board are needed within the process. Question: - Dave Lewis – Could the weed board delegate to the Chairman to make a determination on non compliance cases? Nicho Hash and Christian Lehnert described the current compliance process to the board and additional needs to adhere to the compliance process. The goal is to have the process complete and in place before the weed season begins this year.

Public Works – Eric Griffin – Four new plows are out working. TSEP is currently in legislation, the county has work remaining on Dalton Mountain, Bridges and the continuation of the bridges in Elk Creek area. Audra Zacherl is working on the law enforcement project and budgets. Doug Nisbet, Road and Bridge superintendent is retiring in May after 30 plus years. Hope to have a month overlap in the transition of the position.

City of Helena – Greta Dige – Not present –Busy handling snow complaints.

Board Reports:

Augusta Area: Mike Cobb – Wrote Senator Tester about the Houndstongue weevil, and haven't heard back. The houndstongue insect is on the agriculture pest list and once it's on the list it would be very unique if this bug were taken off. Liked the MWCA annual conference, and learned about new herbicides that are coming out and are effective with fall application.

Canyon Creek Area: Steve Johns – Not present - Snowed in.

Central Valley Area: Joel Redding –Is there a County Extension agent yet? The positions have been advertised and are going through the process right now. Snowy.

East Area: Dave Lewis – More houses are being built in new subdivisions, and will likely cause an increase in new weed cases.

Lincoln Area: Mike Nordahl – Not present.

Helena/South Area: Orville Johnson – It's too cold.

West Area: Judith Anne Vincent – Snowed in – Not present.

Wolf Creek Area: Rob McDonough – Lots of snow. Snow pack is close to last year in the mountains above my property. Comment on the County for plowing the little loop every time it snows, nice to see.

Coordinator Report: Christian Lehnert – Working on budgets, turned in the regular budget for the weed department. Still working on the account 297 grant budget. Hoping to meet with agencies that are currently furloughed to determine contracted services budgets for agreements. New truck is built and we are waiting on delivery hopefully within the next month. Thank you to all who went to the annual conference, nice to see you there. Finishing up the job assessment for seasonal sprayers. The wage has been increased for seasonal sprayers, hopefully this will be beneficial in securing and retaining seasonal workers.

Working on a mustard education outreach to the public and the commercial applicator companies. Help with taking care of mustard. The flooding events, moisture and whitetop last year, there will be a lot of mustard. Eric Griffin, talked about upcoming flood awareness programs

New Business: - Motion for the Weed District to send houndstongue insect letter to the congressional delegation in support of Mike Cobb – houndstongue insect.

Spray Rates Cost Increase: - Proposal increase to cover the cost of the equipment and individuals. Need to increase the cost to cover the labor. Tabled until the next meeting, Christian will present what current costs are being used, and what current expenses need to be covered.

Announcements: **Next Board Meeting** – March 6, 2019 – 1pm Weed Conference Room

Lewis and Clark Conservation District meeting, March 14th at 1:00 P.M. – Conference Room

Agri Forum – March 12, - Jorgenson's 6:00 pm No Host Social, 7:00 pm Dinner.

Adjournment: 2:39 pm